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H E L D A T P H I L A D E L P H I A, F O R P R O M O T I N G U S E F U L K N O W L E D G E.

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Obituary Notice of Thomas S. Kirkbride, M. D. By John Curwen, M. D.

(Read before the American Philosophical Society, Jan. 16, 1885.)

In the company of those who left England with William Penn to seek greater liberty of conscience and freedom of worship, was a family from the northern part of the county of Cumberland, who settled on a farm on the beautiful banks of the Delaware river, in Pennsylvania, a few miles above what afterwards became the capital of New Jersey. On this farm on July 31, 1809, was born Thomas Story Kirkbride, who inherited and cherished the religious faith and strong love of freedom which had led his ancestor to leave his native land and settle in what was then a wild and unexplored section of the country.

The early years of our friend was spent on this farm, and from the pleasant surroundings and beautiful scenery which met the eye was early derived that love of the beautiful in nature and fondness for laying out and adorning the grounds which formed so marked a trait in his character.

His academical education was received in the academy at Trenton, "which attained a high reputation under a succession of able masters," and was distinguished then and for years after for the excellent training given to its scholars.

He graduated from the medical department of the University of Pennsylvania in the Spring of 1832, and was very shortly afterwards appointed Resident Physician of the Asylum for the relief of those deprived of the use of their reason, at Frankford, remained there one year and was then elected Resident Physician of the Pennsylvania Hospital, where he remained two years, and had renewed opportunities of studying the subject of mental disorders in the department of that Hospital which, for eighty years, had been specially set apart for that class of disorders.

After leaving the Hospital he opened an office in Arch street, below Fifth street, and with a strong predilection for surgery he had intended to

devote his attention to that branch. In October, 1840, he was elected by the Managers of the Pennsylvania Hospital to the office of Physician-in-Chief and Superintendent of the Department for the Insane, which had been in progress of construction for several years and was then ready for the reception of that class of patients.

After examining the several institutions for the insane which had been constructed during the last few years previous to that date, he entered on the duties of the new position on the first day of January, 1841, and the first patient was received on January 9, 1841, and in a short time all the insane from the hospital in Pine street were transferred to the new Institution. He gave himself, mind and heart, to the duties of his position, and his zeal and enthusiasm for the welfare of the insane never slackened so long as life endured.

Any one who will read the report of the first year of his administration will see clearly laid down the principles which guided and governed in all the years which followed; and enlarged experience, a more thorough knowledge and more ample means enabled him, with each succeeding year, to add to the resources of the Hospital and the more thorough treatment, medical, hygienic and moral, of those committed to its care. In the earlier years of the Institution great attention was given to laying out, adorning and the careful improvement of the grounds within the enclosure, embracing forty-one acres, so that ample walks for exercise, pleasant drives and cheerful views and surroundings, might direct from morbid fancies to more healthful ideas. The attention given to these matters was the relaxation from more exacting and imperative duties, and gave that degree of out-door exercise which one, in the delicate physical condition and feeble digestion which troubled him at that time, so much required, to give tone and vigor to his whole system.

In October, 1844, the Association of Medical Superintendents of American Institutions for the Insane held its first meeting in Philadelphia, and Dr. Kirkbride was elected its first Secretary, and from that day to the close of his life, he always manifested the warmest interest in its welfare and progress, and took a very active part in all its proceedings, rarely being absent from a meeting.

The ablest deliverances of the Association on the construction and organization of Hospitals for the Insane and on kindred subjects were from his pen, and were so carefully and thoughtfully prepared that after the fullest discussion, by all the members, very little change was made in the phraseology and none in the sentiments or opinions advanced.

He was Secretary of the Association for seven years, Vice-President for seven years, and President for eight years.

His position at the head of the oldest Institution for the Insane in the country, and at the centre of medical education, naturally drew to him all those who were anxious to learn the latest and best plans and arrangements for the construction and arrangement of hospitals for the insane. He was constantly consulted in the arrangements of the State Lunatic

Asylum at Trenton, and to some extent in the plans of the State Lunatic Hospital at Harrisburg. These frequent consultations, joined with a natural fondness for architecture and building led him to prepare his book on the construction of hospitals for the insane, the first edition of which appeared in 1856, and the second and enlarged edition in 1880, having been arranged and prepared for the press during the convalescence from a severe illness which lasted many months and brought him very close to the borders of the unseen world.

In no work in the English language are the true principles of the construction, arrangement, and organization of hospitals for the insane more lucidly and more thoroughly set forth than in the last edition of that book, and were its precepts obeyed and its plans more closely followed, very few of those mistakes would be made in the arrangement of hospitals which give so much trouble and are so costly in their rearrangement.

He early entertained the idea of the separation of the sexes in buildings under the same general management, and this plan was more fully developed in the report for 1854. He labored with the greatest assiduity to collect by private subscription the money needed for the erection of such a building on the part of the property west of the hospital then in operation, and so faithfully did he give himself to this work and so zealously was he supported by the Managers of the Hospital that the greater part of the money was subscribed, and "the first stone of the new building was laid on July 7, 1856.

"The formal laying of the corner-stone took place on the first of October, in the presence of a large number of ladies and gentlemen; on which occasion, addresses were made by Professor George B. Wood, M.D.; Richard Vaux, Mayor of Philadelphia; Mordecai L. Dawson, President of the Board of Managers, and Morton McMichael"

"The building was formally opened for the reception of patients on the twenty-seventh of October, 1859. The cost of the new Hospital with all its out-buildings, the wall surrounding its grounds, all its varied and expensive fixtures of every kind and the furniture in use, amounted to the sum of \$355,907.57. This whole sum has been paid, or there are in hand abundant means for doing so, to be derived from unrealized subscriptions and from ground rents.

"The fact that this whole work has been provided and paid for entirely from private subscriptions is worthy of remembrance in our local history."

When the Board of Trustees of the Pennsylvania State Lunatic Hospital at Harrisburg was appointed by Governor Wm. F. Johnston, in 1851, Dr. Kirkbride was one of the Board, and continued in service until 1862. He took an active and energetic part in the organization of that Hospital, and his long experience and thorough knowledge gave him an influence with his colleagues which he exerted to place that institution in the best possible condition for the promotion of the welfare of its inmates; and no man ever had a more faithful and efficient friend and counsellor in all matters than the Superintendent of that Hospital during his connection

with it as Trustee. Of his connection with the Pennsylvania Institution for the Blind for more than forty years, and the great interest manifested in the design and successful operation of that institution, and the great faithfulness displayed in the very constant attendance at all the meetings of the Managers, from few of which he was absent during the long period of his service, others can better speak who are intimately connected with it, but it may be permitted in this place to say from personal knowledge that, next to the Hospital of which he was Superintendent, no institution held a higher place in his regard and affection.

He received from Lafayette College the Degree of LL. D. in recognition of his eminent ability and the remarkable services rendered to suffering humanity.

While Dr. Kirkbride, by reason of his great ability and calm, deliberate judgment, was called to the discharge of such important trusts, that to which his life was really devoted and by which he will always be best known, was as Superintendent and Physician-in-Chief of the Pennsylvania Hospital for the Insane. Assuming the administration of that trust with reluctance and hesitation of his own ability properly to discharge its duties in the spirit and in the manner in which he believed all such duties should be performed, he gave himself, mind and heart, to the work, in the spirit of his own oft-repeated maxim—what was his duty, was his pleasure.

Association and friendship of the most intimate character, for almost forty years, and constant correspondence for more than thirty years, give to the writer an opportunity of an acquaintance with all his views on matters of common interest in the care of the insane, which enables him to speak in the most positive manner of what those views and opinions were. In every movement in medical societies, in the Legislature or in any other way which had a bearing on the care and treatment of the insane, Dr. Kirkbride, though not in all cases prominently before the public, was always consulted and his counsel and advice earnestly sought, and for thirty years, and these were years in which legislation was most active in that direction, no measure of any importance was enacted in the inception and progress of which he was not fully consulted in all the stages, and he never hesitated to use all his influence with those with whom it would be most effective, either in favor of any measure which might promote the welfare of, or against any which might be injurious to, that class in which he was so greatly interested. A proper estimate of his life-work can best be obtained by a careful consideration, in the briefest manner to render them clearly intelligible, of the various subjects which constantly and steadily claimed his thought and attention. No man ever gave more careful, assiduous, well directed and intelligent thought to all matters connected with the construction of hospitals for the insane, and the fact that the plan he elaborated, and which bears his name, has been incorporated in buildings from the St. Lawrence to the Gulf of Mexico, and from the Atlantic to the Rocky mountains, clearly proves its thorough adaptation

to the purpose. It has been the fashion with some, who, with no practical experience, have pushed themselves forward in matters connected with building hospitals, to decry the plan as behind the age ; but their plans have not yet been tried sufficiently long to prove their defects in all respects, and those defects will be found at the very points where they have departed from the well-considered details which he so carefully worked out.

“So different from ordinary buildings or other public structures are hospitals for the insane, that it is hardly possible for an architect, however skillful, or a board of commissioners, however intelligent and well-disposed, unaided, to furnish such an institution with all the conveniences and arrangements indispensable for the proper care and treatment of its patients. Nothing but a practical familiarity with what is required can do this. All recent experiments in planning hospitals without consulting experts, or asking their opinions before the adoption of the plan, as should be expected, have proved failures. No desire to make a beautiful and picturesque exterior, should ever be allowed to interfere with the internal arrangements, any more than the wish to have an elevated and commanding site should be permitted to compel the provision of costly roads, and the expense and annoyance of having everything, in all future time, carried to its great elevation. The interior should be first planned, and the exterior so managed as not to spoil it in any of its details.

“Although it is not desirable to have an elaborate and costly style of architecture, it is, nevertheless, really important that the building should be in good taste, and that it should impress favorably, not only the patients, but their friends and others who may visit it. A hospital for the insane should always be of this character, it should have a cheerful and comfortable appearance, everything repulsive and prison-like should be carefully avoided, and even the means of effecting the proper degree of security should be masked, as far as possible, by arrangements of a pleasant and attractive description.”

This is not the place, nor would time permit, to go into an elaborate description of the plan, but it may suffice to state that its main features consisted of a central building for all the administrative offices, with wings on each side ; the first wing at right angles to the centre, and at the point of junction a space of ten feet left with windows from floor to ceiling to give ample light ; the second wing parallel with the first, but thrown back so as to have windows from floor to ceiling at both ends of the hall, and the third wing still parallel to the second, and the windows of a similar character at both ends of the hall. From this fact of the wings running parallel with each other, it has been called also the linear plan. The halls of the wings are twelve feet wide, and the ceilings of each story twelve feet high ; rooms on both sides of the hall, and in the centre of the hall large bay windows to give light, and afford a pleasant sitting-room for the inmates, in addition to the large parlor ; every ward to have in it all those conveniences which may be requisite to promote the comfort and well-

being of those for whose use the hospital is constructed. The whole establishment to be so arranged as to be under one roof and in every part to be as light, bright and cheerful as it is possible to have it, and with the object of promoting the comfort and convenience of all, with the least expenditure of time and labor.

Any one wishing to be thoroughly conversant with all the details of construction of hospitals for the insane, should read attentively this work on the construction and organization of hospitals for the insane. The work will be found most admirable for the clearness of all its statements on the different points, most thorough in its elaboration of details, and bearing in every line the impress of a clear head, sound judgment and most intimate acquaintance with everything which can have a bearing on the promotion of the restoration, comfort and welfare of the insane, directed and guided by that earnest conscientiousness which was such a prominent trait in his character.

In forming an opinion on any subject he was never hasty, but submitted all to the careful scrutiny of a sound judgment, which led him to examine with a full knowledge of all the facts bearing on the point which could be obtained. A warm, generous heart, keenly alive to all the finer impulses of humanity, led him so to direct all his thoughts and actions that self had no prominence, but the good of others and the advancement of their happiness was the great aim and object of all his efforts. The more intimately his opinions, on every subject to which his thoughts were directed are known, the more thorough will be the conviction of each mind, that every faculty of his mind and every impulse of his heart urged him onward in the path of entire devotion to the welfare and happiness of all he could reach.

No uncertain sound attended his utterances on all matters pertaining to the welfare, care and treatment of the insane, and the mild and pleasant manner in which his opinions were expressed served to carry conviction to many minds which would have resisted a more dogmatic expression, and added force was given by the evident sincerity and devotion to truth and duty which dictated them. No more positive indication of the confidence reposed in his judgment, and the earnestness and sincerity with which he urged his views, can be looked for, than in the collection of the large amount for the erection of the Department for Males of the Pennsylvania Hospital for the Insane, by far the larger portion of that amount having been obtained by his personal efforts in direct application to individuals, and any one who will examine that long list will see the uncommon tact and energy displayed by him in his appeals to all classes and conditions of men.

On all matters pertaining to the welfare of the insane his opinions were clear and decided, and formed with a care, discretion and deliberation which those would do well to imitate who so freely criticise and often so summarily reject them. To some of those opinions on matters which have been so much discussed in late years, attention must be given in order to

obtain a clear idea of the work which he performed, and the clear head and generous heart which directed that work.

The employment of mechanical restraint has in late years received more than usual attention in the reaction from its excessive use in England many years since, and on a subject of such practical importance in the treatment of the insane, it is only just to quote the opinions of one who had the most ample means of testing it, and who, while believing in its use in certain specified cases, rarely, to use the words of Dr. J. C. Bucknill, of England, carried his theory into practice. His uniform testimony, derived from careful observation and experience, for he had seen its modified use while resident physician of the Friends' Asylum and of the Pennsylvania Hospital in Pine street, and holding that opinion, not because he had formed it, and was reluctant to change it, but simply because he believed that the best interests of a certain class of insane, and that a very limited number required it for their benefit, was, in the language of a resolution of the Association of Medical Superintendents of American Institutions for the Insane, adopted in October, 1844: "That the attempt to abandon entirely the use of all means of personal restraint, is not sanctioned by the true interests of the insane." That resolution was drawn by men, who carefully considered the words they used before committing them to paper.

Dr. Kirkbride discussed the subject in his reports, from the year 1841 down to 1877, in which latter year he used the following language as a full summary of his views: "It is an error leading to wrong popular impressions, to speak of any hospital for the insane as being conducted without restraint. There is no such thing, and cannot be. Where an individual is placed under the control of another, even where the control is of the gentlest kind, it can hardly be said he is without restraint. What is meant is, not that a hospital is without restraint, but is without mechanical means of restraint, and these can be omitted anywhere on provision of the proper substitutes. Mechanical restraint is rarely necessary, and only in a few, simple forms, but when it is required, it is a question to be left for the decision of whoever directs the treatment of the patients. No one recognizes more thoroughly than is done here, the impropriety of subjecting the insane to unnecessary restrictions, and that the precise extent to which freedom of action may be carried can only be discovered by careful observation and the study of the peculiarities of every individual patient. The only persons who can properly decide just how far restrictions shall be carried, and freedom be granted in an institution, are its medical officers, who, having all the responsibility for the results, if at all qualified for their positions, may safely be entrusted with the power to decide all such questions, which should really be regarded as a part of the treatment of the patients."

In the matter of occupation, employment and amusement of the inmates of a hospital, Dr. Kirkbride always held advanced opinions, which the great majority of men have not yet attained to. He held, and held justly,

as every reflecting man must admit, that some means of diverting the mind from morbid ideas to more healthy thoughts, was as important as medicine to a disordered bodily system, and that the two must be carefully adjusted to the condition of the individual at the time. He was never satisfied with what he had done, but was always reaching out for something newer and better in addition to those already in use. This idea runs through all his reports, like a golden thread, to brighten and strengthen them. In reference to occupation, a wise caution is given, which should be carefully pondered, if they could do such a thing, by those whose ill-digested opinions indicate a much greater amount of zeal than knowledge.

“Moderate, wisely regulated labor is really serviceable to many of the insane, but hard work, so carried on as to be profitable to any institution, is very rarely of benefit to the patients, while often it is injurious to an unsuspected extent, to a class whom the excitement of disease stimulates to extraordinary exertion. Besides these, there are others, who uncomplainingly labor at the tasks assigned them, only because they are urged to do so, when their natural instincts would lead them to enjoy the rest, for which they have a persistent craving, and which comes from an actual want of strength dependent on the existence of disease. It is never to be forgotten by those having charge of the insane, that much as the malady differs in form and degree, all of these cases are as truly the subjects of a serious disorder in a delicate organ as are those who have any other sickness, in which the sufferers may be so much better able to describe their true condition, and to secure proper attention to their wishes. In providing day occupation for the insane, much of it must be very different from the hard work from which alone any material profit can be anticipated. For much the larger portion of the patients, walking or riding through the grounds, or in their vicinity, with all the attractions that can be connected with them, will be much more valuable as remedies and nearly as profitable pecuniarily, as labor usually is. Every one of the many forms of diversion that should always be liberally provided, and all the games, out-doors and in-doors, especially those that give active exercise in the open air, have a positive value, and really contribute more or less to the great objects for which these hospitals are established. The labor problem in regard to the insane is probably best settled by the conclusion, that it is hardly possible to exaggerate the importance of occupation of some kind for every class, but also, that harm, quite as easily as good, may follow employment, in unwise forms, and that a practical knowledge of the whole subject in regard to kind, amount, and the physical and mental conditions of those on whom its effects are tried, is indispensable to secure the best results from its use.

“The necessity for entertaining and amusing the patients of a hospital for the insane, and giving them suitable varieties of occupation—no matter what is the character of the institution—is now generally conceded. For the day-time reasonably good arrangements are commonly made for effecting these objects, but there is a long period in the evening—often amount-

ing to several hours—when out-door pursuits are suspended, and when, without carefully systematized arrangements, the patients go through a dreary period of monotonous and unprofitable existence, for which there is really no necessity. If it is desirable to correct this state of things for one evening of the week, it is equally so for every other. It is no more difficult to make these evening entertainments a daily provision, allowing nothing to interfere with their regular performance, than it is to provide for the numberless other needs that come up at stated intervals in the daily routine of hospital life. In making out the estimate for the provision or support of any of these (State or municipal) institutions, a liberal allowance should always be made for suitable rooms for these purposes, for books and papers, for inexpensive pictures for the walls, for daily occupations and for evening amusements in all their variety; and most assuredly no part of the expenditures—although this may do its work ever so quietly—will more certainly contribute to the happiness and improved condition of the patients, or tend more to elevate the character of the institution, giving abundant returns for all the money thus appropriated. These are a part of the varied means which are sure to aid in the restoration of those who are curable, in securing the comfort and happiness of those who are not likely to be restored to health, and the quiet and good order of the household.”

To trace out and understand the wonderful influence which he had over his patients, and how he induced them to adopt most readily the plans which he believed would surely advance their restoration and add to their comfort, can best be done by considering his wondrous patience, and his devotion to everything which had a bearing on their welfare, and the sincerity which they felt sure directed every thought and movement. His thoughtful nature was always looking forward to what could be made most steadily and certainly available for their pleasure and for the promotion of their mental and physical health. Until the erection of the Department for Males, he made it a rule to see all the patients under his charge in the morning, and if anything prevented that visit, he was sure to take an opportunity in the course of the after part of the day, to attend to what he considered a most imperative duty. That visit was not a mere perfunctory duty, but he always took occasion to inquire, particularly, into the wants and feelings of the individual, hear all that he had to say, give advice, soothe, cheer, or so impress the person with his interest in him, and his earnest desire to benefit him, that he felt in every way, for the time, relieved, and looked longingly for the return of the same kindly attention. His manner, his address, his patient listening to all complaints and grievances, the gentle tone of his voice and the sympathy which manifested itself in every tone and action, had a wonderful effect on those who were depressed and greatly cast down, as well as on those of an opposite character.

He was a most earnest advocate of every medical, hygienic and moral means, which could be made available for the restoration and comfort of

those placed under his charge, and he sought to impress, not only all these views, but all his interest in his patients, on those who had more immediate direction. The rules, which he prepared for the conduct and guidance of those entrusted with the immediate care of the patients, show how zealously he sought to impress his own principles and practice on all who came within the reach of his influence; but the example of his daily conduct impressed the lesson more deeply than any written code could have done. No one could fail to feel the influence of that genial, gentle nature, constantly before him, and not be impressed with its great worth, and the effect it must necessarily have on all who could be reached by it. When the physical frame could no longer bear the strain put upon it by the constant visits to the wards, in all their detail, the interest was still extended to all, but more directly expended on those whose restoration could be most certainly effected by it.

Of a naturally quick and impulsive temper, that was so effectually under control that none would have suspected its existence, unless some wrong or injury were done to the insane, and then the rebuke came, sharp and decisive; not in an angry tone, but as the result of that indignation which such a sensitive spirit would naturally feel, on witnessing, or becoming acquainted with any violation of the better instincts of true manhood.

Like all genuinely conscientious natures, he was very sensitive, and seeking with unaffected honesty and truthfulness to do all in his power for the relief of suffering humanity, he was naturally, perhaps unduly, sensitive to the attacks made by many, whose philanthropic zeal was often assumed to make an impression, in their own favor, on their fellow-men. Certain it is, that he was very much harassed by the malicious attacks of designing persons, whose utter lack of true benevolence led them to say and do things, totally at variance with truth and justice. When in feeble health, and endeavoring to do all in his power for the benefit of his fellow-men, he was assailed with very unjust statements, made by those whose misguided zeal led them to the utterance of strictures on his character and professional standing, which their high religious profession should have made them blush to make public, without a more thorough investigation of the true facts. In the minds of those who knew him best, the impression is very deep that those strictures had very much to do in bringing on the condition which ultimately resulted in his death.

Deeply imbued with the religious principles of the Society of Friends, in which he had been educated, while placing little value on various externals of the Society, he endeavored, consistently, to carry out the principles laid down by them, in all his intercourse with his fellow-men. To a disposition, genial, gentle and kind-hearted, he united great decision and determination of character, and, convinced after careful examination that he was right, he kept steadily on in the course he believed to be correct, not deviating in the least from what he believed to be the true line of duty. Generous and liberal-minded, strong in his attachments and friendships, he cherished no feelings of enmity against any, but strove to live in peace

and harmony with all ; and, when others refused to act harmoniously, quietly going on in the line of duty, avoiding contention while adhering strictly to what he believed to be truth and justice. His generous mind revolted at all pretences and attempts to make the worse appear the better reason, and he scorned all deception.

He possessed a wonderful tact in his intercourse with the insane, which, combined with unfailing good nature, and honesty of purpose, gave him great power, which he always used to advance their interests in the fullest manner. Calm and self-possessed in scenes where others were agitated and alarmed, he exercised the happy faculty thus enjoyed, with great judgment and discretion, thus evincing in the clearest manner his power to direct and control. No trait of his character was more prominent than his single-hearted devotion to every good word and work, and in this, and in the earnestness and conscientiousness with which his work was performed, he strove to follow the example of Him, who always went about doing good.

Biographical Sketch of the Rev. Elias R. Beadle, D.D., LL.D.
By D. Hayes Agnew, M.D.

(Read before the American Philosophical Society, February 6, 1885.)

To preserve in some tangible or permanent form a record of the life-work of those, who, after having achieved distinction in some one or more of the various spheres of human pursuits, have gone to swell the ranks of the great silent majority, is a custom no less commendable than beautiful. In accordance with this time-honored usage, the duty has been imposed upon me, of preparing a memoir of Elias R. Beadle, late a member of the American Philosophical Society. The delegated task is one sweetened by the recollections of a close companionship which existed between the writer and the deceased during all those years in which he wrought in this goodly city. Elias R. Beadle was born at Cooperstown, Otsego county, in the State of New York, on the 13th of October, 1812. He was the son of Henry and Susan Squires Beadle. There were only two children of these parents, the subject of the present sketch, and Doctor Tracy Beadle, late of Elmira, New York.

Young Beadle was early designed for a mercantile life, and, with this object in view, was placed in a store, in the town in which he was born, at the tender age of thirteen. History furnishes many examples of misunderstood genius ; of fruitless attempts to turn the drift of a boy's life into unnatural and uncongenial channels.

And so with young Beadle, possessing rare powers of head and heart, with an insatiate thirst for the acquisition of knowledge, it was impossible that a mercantile pursuit, the duties of which were so routine and mechanical, should prove other than repugnant. Accordingly, in a short